(b) if so, when the decision was taken and what progress has so far been made in that direction; and

(c) by when the imported aircraft carriers are due to be put out of the operation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The exact dates of decommissioning have not been decided.

Naval exercise with Oman and Iran

1936. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Navy has recently held naval exercises with Oman and Iran;

(b) if so, what are the salient features thereor;

(c) whether similar exercises have also been held with US Navy and others during the past two years; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the inferences drawn as a result thereof to upgrade and update Indian Navy and its equipments, war ships and infrastructure etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b) Joint Naval exercises were held only with Oman on 13th and 14th January, 1993 off Mina Qaboos harbour in Oman. Two Indian Naval ships, participated in these exercises, which included seamanship procedures, manoeuvering station keeping and firing by medium calibre guns. The Omani Navy was represented by five vessels of Fast Attack Craft type.

(c) Joint exercises were also held with the Navies of Australia, France, UK, USA, Singapore & Oman during the past two years. In addition Passage Exercises have been held with Australian and Indonesian Navies.

(d) Indian Naval ships have recently commenced exercising with foreign Navies. At the initial stages only very basic evolutions and communication procedures have been exercised.

Updating the MIG planes

1937. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been/are being taken to indigenise and update the production of MIG series of War-planes with or without Russian collaboration; and

(b) the number of MIG planes acquired from USSR indicating the year of purchase and their safe-flying period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Licences for manufacture of MiG-21 and MiG-27 aircraft in India were given by erstwhile USSR. Indigenisation of spares/components/systems is a continuous process and the same is done, after assessing techno-economic viabilty and availabilty from alternate sources. MiG-21 BIS aircraft is proposed to be upgraded to incease its operational capabilities.

(b) Aircraft can be flown till the completion of their Total Technical/Calendar Life, which is different for different types of aircraft. It would not be in the public interest to divulge the other details.

New training institutes for armed forces

1938. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some new training institutes for Armed Forces personnel and ex-servicemen are proposed to be established in Andhra Pradesh;